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BLM Issues Fire/Fuels EA

The Bureau of Land Management has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) and proposed amendments concerning fire and fuels management on approximately 8.4 million federal surface acres managed by the BLM in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments describe and analyze the impacts of fire management alternatives and would update the BLM's fire and fuels management practices to better achieve the goals of the National Fire Plan. Under the EA's proposed action, the BLM would amend all resource management plans to provide consistent fire management direction, include new guidance for fire management, and revise specific decisions that currently limit BLM's ability to conduct safe and efficient treatments of hazardous fuels. The proposed fire and fuels management would increase protection of human life and decrease natural resource and private property damage.

The BLM initiated the EA to improve implementation of national fire and fuels management policies on BLM-administered lands in the three states. Past policies and activities have either moderately or significantly altered the fire regimes and frequencies on about 1.3 million of the 8.4 million acres of public lands in Montana and the Dakotas.

A decision concerning the proposed fire and fuels management and plan amendments is anticipated following a 30-day protest period. Approval will be withheld until protests are resolved on any portion of the proposed plan amendments that are protested. Copies of the document are available from the BLM or on the internet at www.mt.blm.gov. For more information, contact John Thompson at 406/896-5030.

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